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USSR - Arms Control: Moscow seems to be on the point of modifying its proposal for complete demilitarization of the seabeds.

A Soviet official at the UN gave the impression that Moscow may move closer to the US view. He said that several aspects of the seabeds treaty are under discussion in Moscow. The original Soviet formulation on seabeds was comprehensive, including a ban on detection devices and mines. The US position is to limit the discussion to weapons of mass destruction.

The official added, however, that Moscow would insist that the prohibition of fixed launching platforms must include a ban on conventional as well as nuclear warheads. The US would exempt conventional weapons. He also said prohibition should begin 12 miles from national baselines instead of three, as the US holds.

The Soviet official, who recently returned from Moscow, said that he came away with the impression that the USSR would soon propose a date and place for the strategic arms limitation talks. He said that Moscow will probably want to include all types of strategic arms in the talks, including bombers, and would expect the US to initiate discussions since it is the one "pressing" for them.

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